

Dear Mr. Acting Chair, Members of the AHEG bureau, UNEP Secretariat

1. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the revised roadmap and scenario note for the AHEG.
2. Norway congratulates the AHEG bureau on their efforts of keeping the momentum of the AHEG in moving forward in this very challenging situation the world is going through, and for providing a very good scenario note with detailed guidance for both virtual working groups and regional consultations.
3. We appreciate all flexibility shown by delegations in finding a good working modality for the AHEG between now and UNEA-5. We still believe that it is of utmost important that the AHEG is given the necessary time and space for a throughout discussion of the response options at the global level.
4. Norway supports the proposal put forward in the draft scenario note including the proposal to hold one AHEG meeting virtually in the 2nd week of November. It is critical that a good way for exchange online is being provided for all delegations to participate as expressed in paragraph 11 of the Scenario Note. It will therefore be crucial to identify the various virtual working groups and their facilitators as soon as possible.
5. Unfortunately, the technical briefing on the submitted response options on 29 July falls within the public summer holidays in Norway. We will try our best to identify members of our team that could be available for the briefings, but it would also help if the Secretariat could point to those that are expected to be ready to answer questions which of the two sessions or the timing for the various presentations.
6. We also note that you make reference to the Secretariat paper base on the various submissions for this discussion. It looks like this paper has not been updated. Norway provided detailed comments to this paper previously, and in current form we do not think it is at all conducive to the discussions that we need in the AHEG. It does not properly reflect the substantial content of our submission. Since this paper was presented there has also been very good submissions put forward by the African Group, Vietnam and others that are not reflected. We would also welcome additional information from the bureau on this, as well as the proposed deadline for submissions on 15 August (i.e do you envisage revised submissions or new submissions from others that have not yet submitted their input?)
7. On September 3 there is an activity names " Virtual working group on Elements Paper". We very much welcome this activity, but we seek more guidance from the Bureau and the Secretariat on who will develop this paper, what sort of status it will have, by when it will be expected to be ready. If the work of this virtual working group is to be effective such a paper should be provided at least 2 weeks before, that is 17 August. We also encourage the authors of this paper to have a clear focus on the global response options when drafting such an elements paper, as we believe this is the core of the business to be undertaken by the AHEG. We would also welcome further clarification on how the three

meetings proposed will develop this paper and more clarity on the interplay between the deadlines 3, 17 and 30 September.

8. Norway has also taken note of the following text in the scenario note: Based on the submissions made on response options, the already identified key elements are as follows, 1: waste management and responsible production; 2: monitoring and review and science-based actions; and 3: financial and technical resources and capacity-building. While these are all important key words and elements that have been identified, it is our positional that a new global agreement need to be comprehensive when addressing the issue of marine litter and microplastics and thus these elements need to be considered as a whole, and not stand-alone. We need to take a practical approach to addressing the issue of marine plastic pollution across the whole life-cycle of plastics and identify what action needs to be taken at a global level to support countries in their ambitious efforts to deal with this issue.
9. We also encourage the Acting Chair and the bureau to start preparing for the time between 30 September and UNEA-5 already now. From reading the draft scenario note it appears that such a discussion will not take place before 30 September, which will be too late. A busy autumn lies before us and we need to make the most of the time at hand.
10. In Annex B on the Guidance for the Virtual Working Groups there is a mention of four guiding questions in paragraph 10 that are not identified, while three guiding questions identified in paragraph 11. Norway believes that these should be given careful considerations so as to make the most of progress in our discussions. These questions should also be brought to the front, so that it is made clear to all delegations what is expected as an outcome of the discussions. Furthermore, we suggest that all delegations are encouraged to look at pre-recorded presentations etc BEFORE the actual meeting. This is to ensure that we make the maximum of our meeting time.
11. Furthermore, we have already advised the Secretariat that the briefing on 29 July takes place during our public summer holiday and thus we will not be able to attend the two sessions. We kindly ask the Secretariat to take note of any questions relating to the Norwegian submission and we will provide written answers upon our return to the office on August 3rd.

We wish a constructive meeting of the bureau tomorrow and we also look forward to a very hectic and engaging autumn for the AHEG.

Stay safe everyone!